

## Duality of Europe: Report on the carried out research and one new book

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### **Abstract:**

A. Nováček: *Duality of Europe. Report on the carried out research and one new book.* – Klaudyán, 8–9, No. 2, pp. 85–93. The contribution informs on the results of the author's long-time research of the historical phenomenon of the duality in Europe which he has published this year in his scientific monograph: *NOVÁ EK, A. (2012): Dualita Evropy: historickogeografická analýza. eská geografická společnost, Praha.* [Duality of Europe: Historical-geographical Analysis.] For this purpose the article presents in its individual form a modified English version of the summary of this book. The introduction outlines the issue of the European duality itself and the way in which the author approaches it. The biggest part of the contribution deals with the aims of the carried out research and the way of their achievement, or more precisely with the methodology and the form of the processing applied in this book. The conclusion deals with two examples of synthesis of the gained knowledge and findings relating to the development of the duality in Europe. The first one is the distinguishing of the two types of dualities which can be traced in European history. The second example is the attempt to clearly divide into periods and characterize the development of the duality in Europe from the ancient until the present times.

### **Key words:**

duality of Europe – historical development – author's research

### **Introduction**

The notion of Europe as a space divided into two sub-regions became prevalent after World War II. Until at least 1989, this duality was clearly recognized in scientific research and by the general public: the capitalist and democratic West on the one side and the socialist and totalitarian East on the other. The roots of European duality, however, reach much further into the past and their effects can still be observed in a wide variety of phenomena and aspects. As proof we can consider the fact that, even after 1989, when the distinct post-war bipolarity lost its rigid and “transparent” form, no sudden breakdown of dual perceptions concerning Europe occurred (although parallel conceptual alternatives do, naturally, exist). And so, the division of Europe into West and East continues to be present and affirmed in a number of research-based and popular works, including the media and even people's own ways of thinking.

In terms of the development of duality in Europe, the last twenty years can be considered particularly dynamic. By this, we mean the transformation of Central Europe and its gradually realized

orientation towards the West. This trend is interpreted – not infrequently – as a return to the natural state. What exactly is this “natural state” or, more precisely, did such a state ever exist? If so, what determined and determines its existence? These and other questions, along with a series of ongoing alterations to the European image as we know it, make this topic very current and logically encourage one to seek greater knowledge and understanding of the causes and effects of the processes that have formulated Europe’s duality.

In addition to this significant research challenge, the fact that, to this point, science has primarily focused on the 20th century or on the question of Central Europe – to which part of dual Europe has it belonged in the past or does it constitute its own, independent unit. Any studies that do work with a more expansive historical perspective tend to focus on only one aspect of duality (e.g. cultural-religious), on the basis of which they describe a historical-geographical division of Europe into two parts. Authors attempting to more specifically delimit – in better instances with physical constructions and descriptions of the division and cartographic depictions of its borders – such divisions are no exception to this narrow focus. Practically all of these studies present a static understanding of duality and lack deeper historical-geographical analysis of the phenomena with its dynamic and flexible nature.

In terms of time and space, the duality of Europe exhibits a very broad reach. Consequently, the subject of interest of our new research project automatically becomes the entire territory of what is or has been defined as Europe and the time period from the classical antiquity – when, according to the author, the formation of the first clearly evident duality: north-south, occurred – to the present. Clearly, preparing a completely comprehensive study of such a topic constitutes a very ambitious undertaking and it extends significantly beyond the scope of one publication. Thus, our research on the duality of Europe focuses on two aspects: 1) conceptual delimitation of duality and 2) historical-geographical analysis of its development over time, including a description of the evolving imaginary border between Europe’s two parts.

The specifically focused topic described requires an interdisciplinary approach that is capable of integrating the findings and methods of both geographical and historical research and, in some cases, that of additional social sciences. This research found an appropriate overarching paradigm in historical geography, which explores changes in the geographical organization of natural and social phenomena in relation to space and time.

### **Research objectives and structure of the book**

The new research of duality in Europe, the results of which are published in the author’s book, is based on primary objective to “find and attempt to conceptually define and spatially describe duality in Europe on the basis of analysis of its long-term development”. This general intent contains, within itself, a number of research levels that are clarified in five particular objectives (I – V). As a means of systematically and logically ordering its content, the book is divided into seven chapters. The first chapter presents an *introduction* to the topic and the structure of the research. The final chapter assesses findings and attained results in the form of a *conclusion*. The extensive list of sources utilized and literature relevant to this topic can also be considered an important part of this work, along with the appendices which detail certain analytical outcomes of the research.

The second chapter, entitled *Research and Conceptualisation of Duality in Europe*, focuses on theoretical and methodological delimitations of the research and discusses approaches and concepts that can be appropriately applied to the topic in question. Developmental theories, with their emphasis on regular patterns of spatial development and socio-geographic differentiation, assume an important position among these. A series of theoretical concepts that emphasize various understandings of the duality of Europe are presented here. Generally, positivist approaches tend to dominate which, among other things, led to the nomothetic orientation of our study. Also presented is a certain degree of confrontation with alternative views concerning the differentiation of Europe or, in other words, differing opinions on the composition of Central and East-Central Europe. Engaging with the issue through these theoretical-methodological approaches was a necessary step in the research, particularly for the subsequent formation of our own concept of European duality.

The third chapter – *Assessing the Development of Duality in Europe* – presents the specific procedures and methods applied in our research. Emphasis is placed primarily on describing our own historical-geographical analysis of the development of duality in Europe. In this case, it was a precisely defined and structured process that combined elements of quantification with the so-called “soft” approach to the complexities of reality. The procedure of analysis is explained using two examples of its application: one for the pre-industrial and one for the industrial period. The creation of a new methodology led to the fulfillment of the third (III) of the lower-order objectives: “create and apply an appropriate methodological approach for historical-geographical analysis – an analysis of aspects of duality in Europe’s historical territories for various time periods”.

The crux of realization of the primary objective is found in the fourth through the sixth chapter. As stated above, this research objective is divided – i.e. a conceptual division – into a general and specific level of analysis of development and subsequent synthesis of findings. The following chapters’ contents are in line with this.

*Delimitation of Duality in Europe*, the fourth chapter, explores the general level of the issue in question. The author presents his own concept of the duality of Europe, pursuant to objectives I and II, i.e. “formulate a concept of the duality of Europe which is more complex and dynamic and which will account for the changeable nature of contemporary reality” and “attempt to structure and create a hierarchy of the various aspects of reality, determine their weight and temporal changeability”. This conception views duality as a complex phenomenon that can be studied and delimited on the basis of four aspects – groups of factors and their associated indicators: cultural (including religion), socio-economic, political and ethnic. The addition of structure, a hierarchy and the determination of variables is dependent on context within the historical development of Europe. The author’s concept of duality defines content delimitation in two ways: first, by determining a so-called ideal type and, second, by determining a standard ratio and interaction between both parts of Europe. The subsequent integration of these components results in a comprehensive and temporally variable picture of the duality of Europe.

In the fifth chapter (*Historical-geographical Analysis of Development of Duality in Europe*), the findings of a far-reaching historical-geographical analysis are placed into this general and partly theoretical platform in an effort to “find the main dividing lines between Europe’s two parts for various time periods and to construct and cartographically present a boundary of duality” (objective IV). By delimiting its key elements (core areas, borders of duality, transition zones, etc.) the duality of Europe takes on more precise spatial contours. A total of 14 time periods from the antiquity to the present time are analyzed, resulting in the same number of maps (for illustration see Fig. 1). These can be considered one of the most important outcomes of the project. Observations concerning the development of duality are based comparing findings from temporally successive time periods, wherein emphasis is placed on clarifying specific spatial changes and processes in conjunction with teasing out the causes behind any changes. Thus, the fourth and fifth chapters together answer a number of questions posed at the outset of the research: What led to the emergence of duality in Europe and when and how was it formed? What is the crux of this duality and how has it developed over time? Is it possible to observe any boundary changes between the ‘two Europes’ and, if so, where did they occur?

The sixth chapter, entitled *Development of Duality in Europe: Synthesizing Conclusions*, explores the last of the objectives (V), to “generalize and explain long-term processes and trends, or regular patterns, in the development of duality; pinpoint their primary causes and, in so doing, shed light on the roots of the current state of affairs and current developments”. Various passages of this concluding synthesis provide answers to the remaining initial questions from the introduction: Did this dividing line exist and evolve statically or was it subject to more or less dynamic changes over time? How can general processes and tendencies, if not regular patterns be distinguished and how do such processes correspond with certain development theories and concepts?

## Applied methodology

Selection of methodological applications designed for working with data and subsequently evaluating development of the duality of Europe were determined by the complex nature of the issue, by requirements for continuity and historical comparability as well as by the limited possibilities for utilizing certain statistical sources. The process element of broadly defined historical-geographical analysis, in particular, can be considered innovative, even though, in the eyes of some, it simply involves the application of various methods routinely used in geographical and historical research. The combination of statistical and “soft” methods also served to minimize the risks that using only one of these types of methods could present. While more precise and complicated quantification could not be fully implemented, due to the historic and complex focus of the study, a “soft” approach, by itself, could potentially lead to speculative conclusions as a result of insufficient doses of data and precision.

The analysis focused on a changing collection of historical territorial units and 14 time periods. It resulted in a classification based on values exhibited by the territorial units in the observed indicators of duality. These indicators were structured in accordance with four generally defined aspects of duality: cultural (A), socio-economic (B), political (C) and ethnic (D). Determining categories for the values of a given indicator (phenomenon) was unique for each, depending on its statistic distribution and careful comparison of the territorial units. At all levels of the analysis, categories were expressed as nominal values on a scale from zero to six, with the number three always signifying the approximate middle ground – a point of demarcation for duality. The values arrived at in this manner were further analyzed on the basis of select statistical methods to calculate so-called group indexes. On the basis of these indexes, the territorial units were classified, according to precisely defined rules, into two groups: those that belong to the first or the second part of dual Europe, i.e. to the West or the East.

The methods of analysis for the pre-statistical (pre-industrial) period were simplified in certain aspects – for logical reasons – and their results are, therefore, less exact or conclusive in nature. In the case of the statistical (industrial) period, the existence of a sufficient amount of statistical resources facilitated work with quantitative parameters and more exact categorization. In contrast, we can label certain analytical results from the period after World War II and the current post-industrial period as being less representative. In spite of the fact that, in the case of these latter periods, other indicators exist that could provide greater explanatory power (particularly qualitative indicators), our analysis refers only to the existing set of primarily quantitative indicators, so as to promote better comparability between the various time periods analyzed. The analysis’ findings and the delimitation of the present-day west-east duality, especially, should be regarded as provisional in nature. Their accuracy could be confirmed by using more appropriately conceived methods or different indicators. The in-depth analysis of all 14 of the time periods was, by far, the most time consuming portion of the research.

## Short synthesis of the development of duality in Europe

The summary of the development of duality is focused in our work on a number of aspects. In particular, it examines changes in the relationship and relative size of both parts of historically divided Europe, including their identity, the position of their core areas and differences in stages of development. It attempts to detect long-term tendencies regarding changes in the location and nature of duality borders and transition zones, facilitating divisions between dynamic and static periods. Special emphasis is placed on identifying determining factors and causal relations behind long-term development tendencies and on reflection through the prism of certain theoretical points and generally valid patterns of spatial evolution. Valuable findings resulting from the synthesis include the identification of basic stages of European duality development. The conclusion even presents a limited attempt at predicting development trends concerning Europe’s duality in the future.

As an interesting example of the conclusions resulting from such a summary, we point to the distinction between types of duality and the identification of basic stages of development. In the course of this research, we uncovered two distinct forms of duality in the development of Europe. The first, the so-called primary type of duality, describes a relationship between two unique

and relatively equal regions with their own core areas. The second, the so-called secondary type of duality, is a characteristically uneven relationship between two regions, in which the first is a more developed area with its own core and the second is a less-developed region or a dependent territory lacking its own core area. Understandably, these are two ideal types, the elements of which have always mixed with one another in practice. As is clear in the conclusion, the secondary type of duality dominated through the majority of Europe's evolution. Its distinctive and in many ways extreme variety was the north-south duality that dominated Europe through much of classical antiquity and the early Middle Ages. During the course of the early Middle Ages, the west-east polarization of Europe gradually began to establish itself as the main form of duality. This relationship between West and East was originally based on the primary type of duality. However, beginning in the 13th century it gradually took on more elements of the secondary type. This long-lasting state of affairs was later altered by two additional temporary changes. Each of these resulted from Russia's emergence as the core power of the East. This happened first around the transition from the 18th to the 19th century (or during the 18th and the first half of the 19th centuries), when the ratio between elements of primary and secondary duality were more or less equal. The second instance was the period from 1945 to 1989, in which case it was a specific form of the primary type of duality. In terms of the concept of this work, it is clear that while the secondary type of duality, characteristic of the period of west-east duality, is conditioned primarily by the socio-economic aspect (i.e. aspect B), the greater portion of elements of primary type of duality were evident in periods dominated by the cultural and political aspects (A and C, see Tab. 1).

By generalizing the evolution of the duality of Europe, it was able to identify a number of basic stages (see Tab. 1). These differ from one another in their orientation or in the dominant type of duality as well as in the primary aspect determining the duality, the position of core areas or other characteristics. While the long period dominated by north-south duality comprises only one stage, the period characterized by west-east duality can be divided into four distinct stages. The exceptional "x4" stage stands out as being substantially different in nature than the long-term development tendencies evident within the framework of the other stages. It applies to the period from 1945 to 1989 and should be viewed as a unique exception.

**Tab. 1:** Evolutionary stages of European duality

Stage	Time period	Orientation of duality <sup>1</sup>	Prevailing type of duality	Position of the core area(s)	Main aspects behind the delimitation of duality <sup>2</sup> and its conception
I.	1 <sup>st</sup> half 1 <sup>st</sup> millennium BC – 800 AD	S – (N)	secondary (specif.)	S	A: "civilized" South – "barbaric" North
II.	1. 800 – early 13 <sup>th</sup> cent.	W – E	primary	W, E	A: Western – Eastern cultural scope
	2. 13 <sup>th</sup> cent. – 17 <sup>th</sup> cent.	W – (E)	secondary	W	A, B: more developed / Western – backward / Eastern cultural scope
	3. 18 <sup>th</sup> cent. – mid-19 <sup>th</sup> cent.	W – E?	secondary/primary	W, part. also E	B: developed West – backward East
	4. 2 <sup>nd</sup> half of 19 <sup>th</sup> cent. – 1 <sup>st</sup> half of 20 <sup>th</sup> cent. and after 1989	W – (E)	secondary	W	B: developed West – backward East
	x4. 1945–1989	W – E	primary (specif.)	W, E	C: Western – Eastern

Source: Author's own design.

Notes: <sup>1</sup> The orientation of duality describes the relationship between both parts of Europe: S = South, N = North, W = West, E = East.

<sup>2</sup> Aspects: A = cultural, B = economic and social, C = political.

On the whole, we can affirm that this new study brings a new perspective to the research topic, i.e. the differentiation of Europe. It views European duality as a complex phenomenon that is dynamic both in its content and its spatial delimitation. In contrast to other studies that deal with this topic tangentially or with certain biases, it presents a specific, comprehensive and relatively systematic

construction. The conclusions and findings are based upon thorough analysis which gives them some precise lines of reasoning. On the basis of these results, the study attempted to make concrete delimitations of duality for the various time periods examined. Fourteen original maps were created for this purpose (for illustration see Fig. 1). In addition to findings regarding the continuity and roots of the current state of

**Fig. 1:** Map of duality in Europe around 1600 / before 1618



Source: Author's own design; historical boundaries according to Gurálák (2004).

Legend:

-  – historical boundaries (selection)
-  – present-day boundaries
-  – main duality boundary
-  – West (in the cultural sense); dark blue: the most developed western core area
-  – East (in the cultural sense)
-  – Orient, i.e. non-European / Islamic civilization; pale green is used for non-European areas
-  – strong Western influence in non-Western regions
-  – strong Eastern influence in non-Eastern regions
-  – strong Oriental influence on the European territory
-  – economic and socially backward / less developed European regions; the more dense raster the least developed regions

European duality, we also recognize the contribution of the broad introductory discussion of concepts, which summarizes current knowledge regarding this topic. In particular, the creation of a robust concept of duality as well as a methodology involving the application of several original approaches, are valuable contributions. The process of defining and delimitating the evolution of duality in Europe also involved the establishment of a number of terms, necessary for analysis and assessment. These include duality border, transition zone, westernization, easternization, etc. To this point, these terms have been rarely and inconsistently used in academic work. The distinction of two types of duality, referred to as primary and secondary, can also be considered an innovation.

The new book argues, with evidence, that perceiving Europe as space that has been historically divided into two parts has its foundation. In relation to Central and East-Central Europe, it does not agree, from a historical standpoint, with the notion – put forth by others – that this territory constitutes a unified and sufficiently distinctive whole. Rather, this region is a unique transition zone between West and East. Its territory can be shown to change back and forth between one or the other part of Europe, depending on the variables involved and on changes in the border of duality.

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